

Eastern Long Island Extension Project

Phone Log

To: File
CC: Kevin Owen (Iroquois)
From: Mark Gardella
Date: 6-15-01
Re: NMFS

I spoke to Mike Ludwig today regarding both Eastchester and ELI. Very cordial conversation.

Eastchester

Mike mentioned that he spoke with Rick D'Amico regarding timing for construction for the project. Apparently, the western end of the Sound is heavily utilized by winter flounder for both spawning and once the eggs hatch provides a nursery area for the juveniles. Research has shown that once the eggs hatch, the juveniles reside in the western Sound in March, April, and May. Studies have shown that salinities decrease from 31ppt to 24 ppt the further west, and when combined with the area bays and estuaries, shallow depths, and mud bottoms, provides ideal habitat for the flounder. Juveniles then move from the shallow spawning areas to deeper water (35ft) and reside. Because of the abundance of the flounder in the western part of the Sound and to alleviate stress on the juveniles, the NMFS has recommended that the construction window close by March 15.

ELI

Mike indicated that there is very little concern he has for the ELI as long as the tap occurs offshore. He was briefed on the project by George Wisker as was aware of the alternatives and reasons. He strongly recommended that the pipeline not be brought back to shore. If it does, NMFS would have serious concerns for the shellfish and winter flounder. The time windows would be very strict and basically shut down construction from the spring through the fall. Because of the DO issue, the summer would be shut off. He said that the salinities in the central part of the Sound basically prevent any winter flounder spawning, therefore, winter flounder would not be an issue for the NMFS for the ELI. Also, the Shoreham approach is sandy which is also not ideal for flounder and would minimize re-suspension of sediments. As far as NMFS was concerned, the windows would be from Oct-May. There is squid spawning in the central Sound so we would have to address that, but squid spawn throughout the Sound so it is not a big issue. Mike discussed this project already with the DEC who indicated they may have issues with a Oct-May window. Mike suggests that we

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use NOAA data (1980s) and information from the Shoreham plant (as they did alot of fishery studies for the plant) to help justify that flounder do not use the offshore areas around Shoreham. Winter flounder do use the Wading river and estuary further east but that should not cause a problem for the project. T&E are transient so there is no issue there.